

Cultural Conditioning for Addiction

The subject was no more trying to learn something from television than she would be trying to learn something from a landscape while resting on a park bench. Yet television is communication. What shall we say of it, a communication medium that effortlessly transmits huge quantities of information not thought about at the time of exposure, but much of it capable of being stored for later activation?

HERBERT E. KRUGMAN
Electroencephalographic
Aspects of Low Involvement

Addiction as a Marketing Objective

Among the small army of public health specialists who concern themselves with addictive behavior, a new perspective has begun to emerge. Narcotics has turned out to be only the tip of the addiction iceberg. The pathetic heroin user is the obvious, extreme end of the spectrum, involving a usually atypical deviant group within the general society. Narcotics

addicts are apparent only because eventually they must involve themselves in criminal activities to support their habits. Much less obvious, the twentieth century has spawned a whole range of behavioral responses that can only be described as addictive. On an enormous scale, involving billions of invested dollars annually, Americans are induced into a value system that applauds addictive behavior almost as a patriotic duty. This wide spectrum of addictive behavior is socially acceptable and invisible for the most part. The American addict behaves precisely as he has been instructed since birth to behave.

America's most honored, celebrated, and profitable forms of addiction involve alcohol, tobacco, and drugs—the three highest-profit products manufactured and marketed in modern society. The list extends to a whole range of other products. The cost of selling these three products, of which advertising is only a portion, is also the highest for any manufactured product in America. As addictive substances, these three products are mutually reinforcing—heavy drinkers are invariably heavy smokers, and almost always heavy consumers of psychogenic drugs such as analgesics, tranquilizers, antidepressants, etc. These three products all propose chemical solutions for problems of emotional adjustment. According to Morris Chafetz, former Director of HEW's National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), "Alcoholism among both youths and adults has at last been recognized as a modern plague." NIAAA statistics revealed that roughly 10 percent of the over 100 million Americans who drink are already either "problem drinkers" or full-fledged alcoholics. "Problem drinker" is merely a polite way to describe an incipient alcoholic or anyone compulsively involved in alcohol consumption. A teen-ager can develop an alcohol addiction in as short a period as eighteen months. An adult might take ten years or more.

The Payoff Outside the Corporation

In a July 1974 study of alcoholism, HEW made some startling disclosures about drinking. The annual subsidy paid by all Americans to support the distilling industry is roughly \$25 billion - \$9.5 billion lost in absenteeism, \$8.5 billion lost in

health care directly attributable to alcoholism, \$6.5 billion in motor accidents, and \$.5 billion in research. And these are not just cold financial statistics. During 1973, nineteen thousand Americans were killed in alcohol-related accidents. There is overwhelming evidence that alcohol contributes to heart disease, brain damage, homicide (in 50 percent of U.S. murders, either the victim or the killer had been drinking), and suicide (25 percent of suicides in the United States have high alcoholic content in their blood). In one Ontario study of 22,600 deaths of persons between twenty and seventy, alcohol was responsible for 38 percent of cirrhosis deaths, 22 percent of peptic ulcers, 18 percent of suicides, 15 percent of pneumonia, 16 percent of deaths from cancer of the upper digestive and respiratory tracts, and over 5 percent of heart and artery disease deaths. Alcohol was also involved in 45 percent of deaths by poisoning, 43 percent by accidental fire, and nearly 25 percent of falls and other physical trauma deaths.

Of total deaths in Ontario for the year of the study, 11 percent were clearly alcoholic-related. The alcoholic, it was discovered, had twice the chance of premature death than the nonalcoholic. The average alcoholic's life-span is shortened by ten to twelve years.

Heavy drinkers are seven times more prone to marital separations or divorce than the general U.S. population, and nearly half the annual 55,000 automobile deaths and the 1 million major injuries involve alcohol.

About 13,000 people die each year from liver cirrhosis. The HEW study revealed a close correlation between heavy drinking and cancer of the liver, mouth, and throat. Heavy drinkers have a fifteen times greater probability of cancer than do nonsmoking teetotalers. The nondrinking smoker has only a four times greater probability of cancer than the non-smoker.

Teen-Aged Drinkers

Lowering of the drinking age to eighteen, occurring in various states with the strong though subtle support of the distilling industry, has had disastrous effects. The HEW study revealed that one out of four American teen-agers now classi-

fies at "alcoholic" or "problem drinker." Michigan reported a 141 percent increase in arrests for drunken driving the first year after its legal drinking age was reduced to eighteen. Parents, strangely, are leading the pressure groups now demanding a lowering of the drinking age in every state. Many are often relieved to find their children involved with drinking rather than drugs—though the two are consumed in combination by most teen-agers today.

In San Mateo County, California, only a few miles south of San Francisco, school officials discovered in 1970 that 11 percent of ninth-grade boys (thirteen- to fourteen-year-olds) admitted drinking alcoholic beverages fifty or more times during the year. By 1973, when the county repeated the survey, the figure had jumped to 23 percent. Among seventeen- and eighteen-year-old seniors, frequent drinkers rose from 27 percent to an astonishing 40 percent. Fewer seventeen- to eighteen-year-old girls drank, the study reported, but were catching up fast—29 percent in 1973, compared with 14 percent in 1970. It would be obscene to translate this suffering and degradation merely into dollars—the usual criterion of value in North America. But if you did, the cost would be far in excess of the \$25 billion price for alcohol consumption.

Addicts Are Just Like Everyone

In the past, middle-aged men appeared the most prone to alcoholism. The pattern is rapidly reversing. During the early 1970s, there appeared a sharp increase in alcoholism among the twenty to thirty age group and among women. During the 1960s, roughly 20 percent of alcoholics treated were women, but by 1974 over 25 percent were women. In certain localities such as Miami, Florida, the ratio reached 50-50.

Skid row derelicts account for less than 5 percent of U.S. alcoholics today. The other 95 percent include everyone—most of whom pass unnoticed until they become involved in sickness, accidents, suicides, or marital and employment problems. Perpetuated by the alcohol industry and society in general is the age-old myth that alcoholics are special people with some basic defect in personality or character. If so, no research over the past fifty years has been able to substantiate the mythology. So far, no one has discovered any common

denominator of personality, character, biology, education or income among alcoholics.

To provide even a conservative measure of the power and affluence of the alcohol industry, the U.S. Commerce Department listed total alcohol industry revenues (after federal, state, and local taxes) at nearly \$18.5 billion in 1973. This is far below the amount paid by Americans to subsidize the industry.

Alcohol, tobacco, and drug advertising are presently the heaviest in print media—so heavy, in fact, that if alcohol, tobacco, and drug ads were suddenly banned, very possibly about half the advertising dependent publications in the country would go out of business. America's economically hard-pressed newspapers would suffer severely if they lost their ad lineage for any of these three products. Many would simply collapse into bankruptcy.

The Consumption Addict

The media know their drinkers well and have studied them in great detail for many years. Though they rarely admit it, the knowledge that the media, distillers, brewers, and winemakers have about their consumers is vastly beyond anything available at NIAAA or in any university library. Perhaps the best description of heavy users—the so-called market within a market—was supplied by the Brand Rating Index (BRI), one of the fanciest and most expensive of media's national research organizations:

"Purely and simply, heavy users are the most important customers you have. They are the men who consume well beyond the average ... the men who account for a markedly disproportionate share of product purchases and usage. As a rule, these heavy users represent an unusually small percentage of the total population. In other words, this active buying minority is the vital purchasing core of the prime market for luxury products and quality merchandise."

BRI, as well as many other commercial research organizations, can supply incredibly detailed information on heavy consumers for virtually every major product sold in America.

These heavy consumers can be easily correlated and analyzed into complex psychographic and demographic profiles.

The statistical data goes on and on and on—boring facts for most of us, but they form a sales-strategy bible for anyone in mass merchandising.

Over 85 percent of all adults in the United States use alcohol. But that's not specific enough. Media—in behalf of advertisers—aim at highly specialized groups. For example, if you are selling only vodka, you are not interested in how many rum drinkers might read a particular magazine or newspaper where your ad appears.

The modern advertisers' needs are highly specific. He must seek out the medium that offers him the best deal: minimum cost per thousand reader/vodka drinkers. Media's prime content function is to deliver a suitable number and quality of readers or audience at a competitive price. And the advertiser is not interested only in just plain everyday vodka drinkers.

The advertiser knows, for example, that 8.1 percent of the total United States adult male population accounts for 83.3 percent of all male vodka consumption. Further, the vodka advertiser knows—and can check the data validity from several sources—that only 2.8 percent of adult males in the United States are heavy vodka drinkers, consuming four or more vodka drinks weekly on the average. U.S. vodka drinkers combine vodka with other beverages. But this 2.8 percent of U.S. male, heavy vodka drinkers accounts for 63.3 percent of all vodka consumed by men.

Heavy product users are the most desirable readership or audience for any medium. These heavies often perform an interpersonal leadership function, especially in alcoholic beverages. If you wish to know of a good Scotch, just ask someone who drinks a lot of Scotch.

BRI defines "heavy alcoholic beverage user" as one who drinks "fifteen or more distilled spirit drinks per week," or roughly two drinks (3 ounces) per day. The "problem drinker" and "alcoholic" are in the upper end of the heavy-user spectrum, accounting for the heaviest alcohol consumption of all.

One very elaborate and expensive study commissioned by Enquire magazine gave a detailed picture of how publishers deliver to the advertiser the heavy consumers for an enormous range of products. The cost per thousand for heavy consumer readers was compared for most major publications

MEDIA SEXPLOITATION

in America. For example, 4.7 percent of Esquire's readers during 1969—something just under 1 million total circulation—were heavy vodka drinkers. Esquire sells them to vodka advertisers on a cost-per-thousand basis for a full black-and-white page at \$42.91. Not bad for a thousand heavy vodka drinkers, especially when compared with their competition. They would have cost \$58.92 per thousand in Look magazine.

HEAVY VODKA USERS (4 or more drinks per week)

Cost Thousand (for Publication	% of Total Readers black and white)	per Readers full-page
Life	4.2	\$57.20
Look	3.9	58.92
Newsweek	4.9	36.45
New Yorker	4.4	56.58
Playboy	5.2	41.75
Sports Illustrated	4.4	42.55
Time	4.6	48.35
U.S. News & World Report	5.7	39.19
Esquire	4.7	42.91

Source: BRI Study, The Market Within a Market

The value of the deal, of course, must take into consideration other elements in the size and quality of their various readerships. The main reason the general circulation publications such as Life and Look ceased publication was their inability to compete in these specialized readership consumer categories. They had the two highest costs per thousand readers in most major product categories of any publication in the country. Television is a much more efficient and cheaper medium for advertisers who pursue general rather than specialized consumers.

Addicts Are Cheaper by the Thousand

BRI provided similar information and prices per thousand readers for heavy drinkers of Scotch, bourbon, rye or blended whiskey, gin, rum, wine, brandy, cognac, cordials or liqueurs,

beer and ale, and ready-to-serve and prepared-mix cocktails. It might be helpful to review the cost-per-thousand ratios for heavy drinkers of all alcoholic beverages—many of whom would be included among the 10 million alcoholics and problem drinkers in the United States today.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE HEAVY USERS (15 or more drinks weekly):

Mention	% of Total Readers	Cost per Thousand Readers (for full-page black and white)
	Life 9.7	\$24.82
Look	8.9	25.39
Newsweek	11.2	15.94
New Yorker	15.3	16.29
Playboy	11.4	19.21
Sports Illustrated	11.5	16.21
	Time 10.6	21.03
U.S. News & World Report	12.5	17.89
Esquire	13.6	14.74

The above information is only a small porportion of the total data available to editors and publishers on U.S. drinking and drinkers. Esquire paid a very large research fee in order to brag to its potential advertisers about the high proportion of heavy drinkers among their readership and their low cost-per-thousand delivery rate.

Subliminally Massaged Addicts

Virtually all alcohol advertising employs subliminal stimuli. One reason, certainly, is that heavy consumers of any product-whom most media content is directed—are likely to

be highly susceptible to subliminal stimuli used in relation to that product.

One of the booze industry's more cynical attacks upon the vulnerable young (toward whom they are strongly discouraged from directing their advertising by several government agencies and national media associations) appeared recently in an alcohol industry public relations poster distributed widely throughout the world. Portrayed were two eighteen-year-olds—clean-cut, clear-cut, neat, forthright, and mature youngsters who peered challengingly from the poster. The caption reads, "You're old enough to drink. Are you mature enough?" What teen-ager could resist replying, "Of course I'm mature enough. My parents think I'm only an irresponsible immature child. I'll show them by drinking..."

That the alcohol industry should disguise their advertising to the young consumer behind a facade of concern for alcohol abuse should not surprise anyone. It is not illegal and it is most profitable.

Most of the early life conditioning to accept alcohol is media-induced. Part of the American culture, used cleverly by the alcoholic beverage industry, involves the identification of masculinity with drinking. Virtually all American young men are taught to believe that being able to "hold your liquor" is a sign of manhood. This is believed by many parents, as well as their children. It costs the alcohol industry very little to sustain widely accepted cultural myths.

The Myth of Moderate Drinking

Very infrequently, on television (which still competes heavily for beer and wine advertising) a news special or dramatization deals—sometimes eloquently—with alcoholism. Generally, though, as a residual background to the nation's illusion about itself, media keep the drunk well out of sight. In a drunken society, drunks are almost completely invisible.

Media is deeply indebted to the alcohol industry for millions in advertising support. These figures are extremely conservative estimates by the U.S. Commerce Department. In 1970 newspapers alone received well over \$121 million in advertising from the alcohol industry; magazines received \$98 million; and television—just for beer and wine advertising—

\$67 million. These amounts have vastly increased over the past five years, now totaling over \$600 million annually, a massive media environment.

The allegation by publishers and broadcasters that media content is unaffected by advertising is sheer nonsense. In behalf of their advertisers, American news media often soft-pedal or rationalize such problems as pollution, alcohol and drug abuse, and cigarette smoking. Audiences are conditioned to accept these calamities as "The price of progress," "You can't change human nature," or "We must maintain a reasonable position." During 1972, when cigarette advertising was banned from television and heavy ad budgets were up for grabs, many "respectable" newspapers across America ran editorials defending the right to publish cigarette advertising as "freedom of the press" in a most cynical disregard for the public interest.

Alcoholism has all but disappeared from media content. back in the 1930—40 era, alcoholism was of a much lesser magnitude, and the alcoholic was visible and very obvious—even joked about. Drunks as objects of humor frequently appeared in print, films, radio programs, and in the theater. There are vastly more drunks around today than thirty years ago—both in total number and as a proportion of our population. Yet they have become the invisible men and women of American society. When they infrequently surface, they are perceived as pathetic aberrations to be avoided or dealt with only through professional or institutional intermediaries. In the media fantasies that presume to show American life, alcoholism appears an insignificant problem. A curious example of media's concern for its heavy advertisers appeared when the HEW 1974 study was announced. In every mention of the research on radio-TV newscasts or publication in magazines or newspapers, a clause or phrase was inserted into the story to make it clear that the pathological alcohol consumption was unrelated to "normal," "social," or "light" drinkers—implying that excessive drinkers were a special type of people.

According to a recent public health survey, media conditioning leads most Americans to conclude that alcohol is much less harmful today than it was before. In America, at least, just the opposite is true.

Another oft-repeated media myth often reminds us, "Europeans know how to drink." Europeans do, indeed! In France, where you rarely see a drunk on the street because of the tolerance levels developed from the world's heaviest alcohol consumption, 42 percent of total health expenditures involve alcohol-related diseases, 50 percent of total hospital beds are occupied by patients with alcohol-related sicknesses, and nearly 10 percent of France's adult population is chronically impaired due to alcohol.

Saturation Life-Styles

The United States appears rapidly headed toward the saturation levels of France, where increases in consumption long ago leveled off. France's national alcohol disaster has been exhaustively studied. And yet, in the name of making a buck the media continue to lead American consumers down this misery-drenched path.

In stories widely publicized by news media, the U.S. Cooperative Commission on the Study of Alcoholism (an industry public relations front) recommended, "... the convivial use of beverage alcohol and drinking with meals should be encouraged, the so-called 'beverage of moderation' [beer] should be stressed, and drinking should become an incidental part of routine activities."

The above statement was the typical rationalized garbage published by Nixon-appointed commissions investigating the public welfare. Such recommendations, often heavily publicized by news media, totally ignored the epidemiological evidence on alcoholic consumption levels. Numerous studies have unequivocally established that neither beer nor wine is a drink of "moderation" (whatever that may mean). In alcoholism, the type of beverage is irrelevant. Domestic wine is the cheapest source of alcohol in American society, beer—quite possibly—the most expensive. Most U.S. hospitals have patients waiting to die from terminal liver disease who have never drunk any alcoholic beverage except beer and wine.

The United States Government gains an annual king's ransom in taxes from consumer taxes on alcohol. But the Nixon Administration appropriated a miserly \$138 million in taxpayer dollars to HEW's National Institute of Alcohol Abuse

and Alcoholism for 1974 to be applied in research, training, community health services, and public education—not even a good-sized drop in the bucket.

This \$138 million is less than a quarter of what the industry spent on advertising during 1974 (over \$600 million) to create and sustain an extraordinarily successful marketing system. The nearly 10 percent of the North American adult population who are now alcoholics or problem drinkers constitutes a calculated (and apparently acceptable) casualty rate that sustains corporation profits for such organizations as Schneley's, Seagram's, and United Distillers. To further illustrate the cynical involvement of media in alcohol merchandising, the April 22, 1974, issue of *Time* devoted a cover story to "Alcoholism: New Victims, New Treatments."

The story, like so many major editorial efforts by the affluent and powerful national magazine, was well written and factual as far as it went. The story emphasized the distilling industry's concern over alcoholism, especially among the young. The theme that drinking in moderation is good for the society was clearly apparent. The story emphasized the \$250,000 spent annually by the liquor industry to combat excessive drinking and that the industry had "awakened to the problems caused by excessive use of its products." No mention was made of the over \$600 million spent in advertising that year to increase both alcohol consumers and the quantities they consume. The article was a public relations piece for the distilling industry. As with the food advertisers who fight to place their ads adjacent to articles on dieting and weight reduction, *Time* had no trouble selling liquor advertising in its alcoholism issue. That particular issue was jam-packed with full-page, four-color advertisements for alcoholic beverages—easily approaching a half-million dollars' worth.

The most skillfully executed—and expensive—advertising artwork is utilized in these ads. With their high profits and heavy proportion (6 percent) of sales invested back in advertising, the liquor industry can afford the most creative artists available in America. A single page of advertising art can easily cost \$10,000 or much more, not counting display space. But if that ad sells several million dollars' worth of

product or brand, it is well worth the price. Several excellent examples of subliminal artwork in alcohol advertising were included in my earlier book, *Subliminal Seduction*.

Merry Christmas From Beefeater

The subliminal themes of love and death still slyly decorate alcohol advertising in magazines, newspapers, and on billboards. One four-color, full-page Beefeater gin ad that appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, and many other publications just before Christmas 1972 displayed the dignified, foil-capped carton just unwrapped—the white gift-wrapping paper crumpled in the background (see Figure 35).

The stalwart Beefeater stands at ease on the label, firmly grasping his ornamental phallic lance. Embedded mosaics of SEX were lightly etched into the surface of the ad in numerous places. These faint embeds may not be completely visible in the reproduction, but there is much more to perceive that will be visible. By the way, the reader might give some thought to how the word Beefeater relates subliminally to American culture. At the conscious, ego-flattering level, the suggestion is a hearty, robust, virile man who eats beef(?).

We can see from the BRI study (which defined heavy gin drinkers as those who take four or more drinks a week) that only 2.6 percent of adult male heavy gin drinkers account for 52.5 percent of all gin consumed by men. These heavy drinkers constitute 5.8 percent of *Time* readers, which has 4.4 readers per copy, or over 26 million total readers who are 55 percent male (14.5 million). The space cost of the ad would have been in the neighborhood of \$60,000. According to BRI, *Time* magazine merchandised their heavy gin drinking readers at a cost per thousand of \$38.46. This figure is based partially on 1969 costs. Heavy gin consumers are unquestionably more expensive on a cost-per-thousand basis today.

Just looking at the Beefeater ad, it is difficult to tell how this very heavy transaction could be triggered by a layout so simple, ordinary, and undistinguished. These banal qualities in the ad are precisely guaranteed to elicit complete conscious indifference.

But look! In the paper wrapping beside the bottle—if you follow the line of the label's BEEFEATER to the right, just a

fraction of an inch to the left of where the line would intersect the right edge of the white wrapping paper, is the tip of a faintly etched nose. Following the nose upward and to the left, there is an eye socket—a dark, faint shadow. The eye socket shadow appears in a straight line from the top gold border of the label within the white wrapper. From the eye socket downward to the right, it is quite easy to locate the nose, mouth, and jaw of a skull or death mask. The Beefeater death mask appears to be under a shroud formed by the white wrapping paper. Merry Christmas anyone? Skulls, as well as a wide variety of other death symbols, have been discovered in the advertising of most major alcoholic beverage brands sold in North America. Some readers may find this fact disturbing or unsettling, especially if they have been brand-loyal boozers. But it is time they discovered that distilling corporations know far more about their real motives for drinking than they do themselves.

The Self-Destruct Syndrome

It is difficult to rationalize death symbols' ability to sell booze. One theory might be that drinkers sufficiently saturated with gin may not care if they live or die. Another theory might arise from the Freudian concept of death wish or death instinct. Then again, perhaps defying death—even subliminally—may enhance a drinker's self-image of masculinity and virility. No one knows why for certain, but death sells extremely well.

Responding to the Poetzle Effect (discussed in the Exorcist chapter) the consumer never even suspects how his unconscious motives or drives were tapped by media manipulators. Worse, the death appeal is likely to be much more intense an unconscious purchase motivation among the young, especially those experiencing puberty.

After several years of dealing with skulls, genitals, and taboo sex embedded in advertising, the simple themes become highly repetitious and rather dull. After all, love and death have been a basic part of human existence for over a million years. Every once in a while, however, a Madison Avenue artist outdoes himself and develops a new twist to the subliminal flimflam.

One curious subliminal slip of the copywriter's Freudian tongue appeared in national advertising for Canadian Mist whisky. For years, these ads have been published regularly in such periodicals as *Playboy* and *The New Yorker*. The ad series is titled simply, "Canada at its best." The art usually portrays a wilderness scene, a lake or forest, often reminiscent of the Canadian image, which, of course, is different in the United States than it is in Canada. The copy head's play on words is interesting when you simply move the space from between at and its to between the a and t in at. The subliminal line then reads, "Canada a tits best."

Again, in a tit culture, there is no greater security or source of oral gratification than, a tit (symbolic or otherwise), preferably mother's but most any tit will do. The subliminal identification between whiskey and milk must also be a source of financial security for the distilling corporations. The connection is reinforced at Christmas with eggnog ads, and throughout the year with other "milky" drinks such as an Alexander or pink lady—not "pink girl," mind you, but "pink lady." (Ladies are mothers, girls are not.)

Where Is Johnnie Walker Walking?

One of the more famous (or infamous) Johnnie Walker Scotch advertisements placed in *The New Yorker*, *Time*, *Playboy*, etc., portrayed the bottle two-thirds empty with ice cubes immersed in a golden brown liquid. Obviously, the ice cubes have been painted on a photograph of a bottle—a common technique that most ad executives publicly deny (see Figure 36).

The label is partially hidden. But reading up along the edge of the label on the left, the word DED appears. If you consciously thought about it at all—and no one but the agency execs apparently did—you would have rationalized that the letters BON were merely on the hidden side of the label. Perhaps a million dollars was spent buying space for this layout in national and local publications. Is it conceivable some photographer could have accidentally permitted such a critical and frightening word to appear in the ad? Hardly!

The ice cubes painted in the bottle are also curious. If you turn the ad on its left side, a very distinct face—complete

with moustache and goatee—appears cleverly hidden away in the ice cube. The ad was shown to several hundred people without one discovering the hidden face, even though many of them were experienced in analyzing subliminal media dimensions (see Figure 37).

Above the face is a strange-looking hat or cap—perhaps a turban, somehow reminiscent of the hats worn popularly at the time of the French Revolution. Once you have had them pointed out, the head and hat are so obvious that it is difficult to believe you repressed the embed when you first saw the ad. The face appears to be bravely smiling. Can you figure out what is so funny? Do not read further until you have figured out the humor of what is going on in the ice cube.

Just below the head, in the area where the neck should be, there is a large ax with its blade buried deeply within the neck of the turbaned head. The ad's subliminally perceived trigger mechanism is, simply, a beheading.

Beheadings are pretty much out of date today except as symbolically motivating devices. A picture of a man with his head cut off is a symbolic castration—the symbolic promise, indeed, of Johnnie Walker Scotch. Could this conceivably be a reason for the heavy Scotch drinker's self-indulgence, providing a reinforcement, justification, and rationalization for impotence fear? Having drunk too much is always a justification for avoiding sex.

A veritable mountain of data on alcoholism is available. Curiously, however, none of this data focuses upon the highly obvious relationship between mass media and drinking. It is a proven fact that the more drinkers in a society and the more they drink, the higher the proportion of alcoholics. Commercial media are almost singly responsible for increases both in drinkers and quantities drunk in North America over the past several decades.

If media advertising reinforcements for alcoholic consumption were suddenly stopped—in the unlikely case any political administration would brave attacks from both the liquor industry and the press (this would probably be presented to the public as interfering with freedom of the press) there would still be alcoholism. The long-term effects of subliminal programming for consumption may endure in some unconscious memory systems throughout life. The high rate of increase in

consumption should almost immediately decrease. But a decade or more might pass before significant decreases in consumption and alcoholism would occur.

Media advertising—like all advertising and sales promotion efforts—has two specific objectives: increase the number of consumers and increase the quantity of consumption. In alcoholic beverages, this also means an increase in alcoholics (very heavy consumers). It is quite clear and extremely simple. So simple, in fact, it is hard to believe—considering the millions in public funds spent annually on alcoholism research—that no one has put it together before this.